Reviewer's report

Title: Therapeutic effects of STAT3-decoy oligodeoxynucleotide on human lung cancer in xenograft

Version: 2 Date: 19 May 2007

Reviewer: Brent Cochran

Reviewer's report:

General

The revised manuscript by Zhang et al is much improved, but there are still a few areas of concern.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. It is still not clear what the relative contributions of apoptosis vs reduced proliferation are to the growth inhibition observed in the lung cancer cells. They have added new data on thymidine incorporation, but cells that are dead or undergoing apoptosis will also show reduced thymidine incorporation compared with control cells just as well as cells that are stuck in G0/G1. Is the cell cycle profile of living STAT3 ODN treated cells different from scramble ODN treated cells after annexin V stained cells are excluded? This is likely the case, but the authors haven't demonstrated this. If they can't show this, then they should soften their conclusions with regard to effects on proliferation.

2. On page 9 they state that their data on the decrease of cyclin D1 and bcl-xl expression demonstrate that this is how the effect on proliferation is mediated. This is correlative data and thus this conclusion is too strongly stated. They should change these data demonstrate to these data suggest that…

3. The grammar and awkward word usage continue to be a problem with this paper. There are eight errors of various sorts in the abstract alone. There are also typos and misspellings. Since I don't think BMC Cancer copy edits papers prior to publication, the authors should send this paper to any of the numerous online editing services such as http://www.bioedit.com prior to publication.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.